

# THE UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS MESSENGER

June 14, 2009

## Conduct Matters (2)

By Greg Litmer

John clearly shows that conduct matters in 1 John 2:3-6 where we find: **“And hereby we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that saith, ‘I know Him,’ and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him. He that saith He abideth in Him, ought himself also to walk, even as He walked.”**

John’s point is simple--those who claim to abide in the love of Christ have the moral obligation (that is the significance of “ought” in verse 6) to conduct themselves as the Lord did to the best of their ability. “Even as He walked” means in the light, in fellowship with God, keeping His commandments. The responsibility to make our walk equal to our claim is a biblical principle. Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:1, **“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.”** *Conduct matters!*

1 1 John 2:15-16 we read, **“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”** That to which we attach our affections dictates how we act.

John wrote of three avenues of approach that Satan uses in his efforts to seduce us to sin, to make us love the world. They are the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. The word “lust” denotes strong desire, and it can be either good or bad, depending upon its usage. As near as I can tell, “lust” is found thirty-eight times in the New Testament and only three times is it used in a good sense. All the other times, including here, it is used to refer to evil desires, “anxious self-seeking.” It is the lowest form of worldly indulgence, referring to an animalistic desire to fulfill appetites.

The “flesh” that John was writing about is not pertaining to skin and bones, muscle and tissue. It is much deeper than that. “Flesh” in the sense of skin and bones, can be used for good or bad purposes. This is where the Gnostics got it wrong. They thought that skin and bones, muscle and tissue were inherently evil. That is just not true. When John writes about “flesh” here, he is writing about the “seat of evil desires.” He is writing about uncontrolled fleshly desires and appetites. It is somewhat the idea of a man acting like an animal. Again, *conduct matters!*

The “lust of the eyes” is the inordinate and ungodly desire for something that is seen; while the “pride of life” is simply prideful boasting over possessions, achievements--the idea that I have mastery over my life. All of these things are manifested in what we do, and what we do is a very good indicator of what we are inside. *Conduct matters!*

In 1 John 3:7 John wrote, **“Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous.”** I love this verse. The plain and simple truth is that one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as the Lord claimed righteousness and lived it. It is important to understand that John is not teaching that the practice of righteousness is how one initially becomes righteous or justified. Rather, his point is that because a Christian has been begotten by God and is in the family of God, and that family practices righteousness, then the child of God is expected to practice righteousness as well. *Conduct matters!*

In 1 John 3:17-18 we find, **“But whoso hath this world’s goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue: but in deed and in truth.”** If we say that we are children of God, it is our responsibility to act like it. We are to manifest in our lives the love of God, and that love is manifest in what we do. Love that is in word only, and not accompanied by conduct that proves it, is useless and hypocritical. *Conduct matters!*

Perhaps you’ve heard the expression, “Charity begins at home.” Love begins at home, too--and the most important family that we have is our spiritual family. They are people that we intend to be with eternally. Surely, all of the teaching about conduct and its importance must begin at “home,” with our spiritual brothers and sisters in Christ. We are bound together by the blood of the Son of God. How we treat each other matters. How we act toward one another, how we speak to or about one another, how we pray for each other is important. It all matters.

In Need of Prayers	General Information
<p>Sister Kimberlin has been able to come out recently.</p> <p>Sharon Tirey continues her treatments.</p> <p>Keep Will Markem in mind.</p> <p>Kristy Kidd, Ron Tirey’s niece, was doing some better in her pregnancy, though still needs our prayers.</p> <p>Kristen Osterling’s unborn baby (friends of the Thompson’s) has been diagnosed with a serious illness. I can only imagine how difficult this news was for the parents. Remember to pray for them.</p> <p>Remember David Blakeman and his health concerns.</p>	<p>The Summer Bible Study Series will be here before you know it (July 20th-24th). We need members who are willing to teach or to assist in the children’s classes. Classes will be held for ages toddler through pre-teen. If you are willing to volunteer we would very much appreciate it as we hope to have the teachers for each class in place soon. Please let David Collins know if you would be willing to teach. Thanks!</p> <p>The monthly men’s meeting will be this afternoon at 4. Men, determine to be involved in the decisions of the congregation and make your plans to attend.</p>

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